

## **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

### **RS23167**

This bill authorizes the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation to sell the Aqua Life Aquaculture Facility to the Idaho Water Resource Board at the 2011 appraised value. Furthermore, because the 2011 appraised value of \$1,635,000 is \$1.1 million below the current estimated value, the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation is provided an ongoing appropriation of \$250,000 from the General Fund to recognize the benefits to the park system from the lost opportunity that a public sale could have afforded. The Department of Parks and Recreation shall deposit the proceeds from the sale into the State Park Land Trust Fund to be used, subject to Legislative appropriation, for development of facilities in the Thousand Springs State Park Complex.

It is in the public interest for the state to retain ownership of the Aqua Life Fish Hatchery property and water rights. Retaining ownership allows use of the assets to resolve delivery calls in the Hagerman Valley.

Background: SCR 116 of 2001 authorized the Department of Parks and Recreation to enter into an agreement with the Idaho State Building authority to finance the acquisition of the McFadden Ranch and Vardis Fisher properties around Billingsley Creek near Hagerman for a state park. SCR 123 of 2012 recognized the limited potential for recreational development of the Vardis Fisher property and authorized the Department of Parks and Recreation to work with the Building Authority to refinance the Billingsley Creek properties and to move the bond payment to other properties. In 2011, the Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) was considering a land exchange and commissioned an appraisal of the 107.07 acre Vardis Fisher component of the Billingsley Creek properties including the Aqua Life Facility at E. 2700 S. in Gooding County. The result of that July 5, 2011 appraisal, done by Integra Realty Resources of Boise, was \$1,635,000 for the land, water rights, and improvements for the 17 acre aquaculture facility and \$1,040,000 for the remaining 90.07 acres of excess land.

### **FISCAL NOTE**

Appropriates an additional \$250,000 from the General Fund to the Department of Parks and Recreation for fiscal year 2015 ongoing. It also authorizes the Department to sell the Aqua Life Aquaculture Facility to the Idaho Water Resource Board for \$1,635,000; therefore, this legislation also authorizes the Idaho Water Resource Board to purchase the facility and its water rights. Moneys in the Water Resource Board's Revolving Development Fund are continuously appropriated for the purposes provided by law.

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